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C O N F I D E N T I A L JERUSALEM 000337

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NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE. NSC FOR ABRAMS/SINGH/PASCUAL

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SUBJECT: ADDITIONAL LAND EXPROPRIATION IN THE WEST BANK

REF: JERUSALEM 300

Classified By: Consul General Jake Walles, per reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C) On February 23, the IDF issued military orders to expropriate 766 dunams (191.5 acres) of land from Palestinians in al-Ramadin and al-Dhahiriya villages in the southern West Bank. According to the IDF orders, the expropriation is for the purpose of "border adjustment." Abd al-Hadi Hantash, Coordinator of Hebron's Land Defense Committee, told ConGen Political Specialist February 25 that the expropriated land will be used to complete a nine-kilometer stretch of the separation barrier near Eshkolot settlement. (Note: Eshkolot settlement (population: 225) is 1.8 kilometers east of the Green Line. End Note). Hantash said construction of the 100-meter wide barrier will in fact require expropriating closer to 900 dunums (225 acres) of land and will cut off Palestinians from 2,400 dunums (600 acres) of olive groves and wheat fields west of the barrier.

12. (C) According to Hantash, two of the nine kilometers of barrier are currently under construction. When the nine-kilometer stretch is complete, the separation barrier will run unbroken for roughly 70 kilometers from Gush Etzion settlement near Jerusalem to Bet Yatir settlement in the southern West Bank. Hantash said at least eight families received expropriation orders, including the large Zamil clan whose confiscation order was for 500 dunums. He added that the Israeli Civil Administration will take the families on a "tour" of the expropriated land, after which Palestinian landowners have seven days to appeal the order.

13. (C) Comment: As in the case of Issawiya and 'Anata (Ref A), this step appears to contradict public and private assurances by the GoI that there would be no further expropriation of land in the West Bank. End Comment.
WALLES